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**U. S. CONGRESS.**—In the Senate, yesterday a bill for the relief of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the U. S. was introduced. It provides that whenever the chief justice or any associate justice shall, in consequence of age, desire to retire, he may be permitted to do so, and yet receive compensation according to his length of service. Mr. Sumner gave notice of a resolution requiring all Senators to take the oath prescribed by the act of July, 1862, before entering upon their duties. This is understood to be designed to reach Senator Bayard, of Delaware, who holds that a Senator is duly qualified by taking the constitutional oath. Mr. Hale made a lengthy explanation in reference to certain professional services rendered by him to parties charged with crimes against the U. S., and offered a resolution instructing the committee on the judiciary to inquire into the circumstances, in order to determine whether he was guilty of any conduct inconsistent with his duty as a member of the U. S. Senate. A message was received from the President communicating a letter from citizens of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Cincinnati, in relation to the negroes freed under the emancipation proclamation, referring the whole matter to Congress.

In the House of Representatives, the Committee on Roads and Canals was instructed to inquire into and report on the expediency of constructing and enlarging the canals so as to connect the waters of the Hudson and the Mississippi with the great lakes. A resolution condemning the action of the preceding Congress in passing the law authorizing the suspension of the habeas corpus, was introduced and rejected by a vote of sixty-seven in favor to eighty-nine against. A series of resolutions setting forth the purposes of the war and the duties of the public in the premises, and also thanking the soldiers in the field, was introduced, and after some debate, adopted. A resolution denouncing the President's proclamation of amnesty as a stretch of power, was tabled by a vote of ninety to sixty-six. The bill providing for the payment of invalid and other pensions was passed. The House adjourned over until Monday next.

The bill prohibiting, under severe penalties, speculation in gold or foreign exchange upon what is called "a margin," and which was referred in the U. S. Senate to the Committee on Finance, produced some sensation in Wall street and elsewhere. Gold fell some two per. ct., but at once rallied again. It is supposed by some that the bill will pass, but a speculation founded upon that presumption would be hazardous. The National Intelligencer says: "The Secretary of the Treasury has not recommended such a measure, nor is it known that it will receive the sanction of the Financial Committee of either House of Congress."

**THE REPORT** of Mr. Memminger, the Confederate Secretary of the Treasury, is republished in the Northern papers. He meets the financial difficulties in the South boldly, and does not attempt to deny or conceal them.

He says:—The continuance of the notes as a circulating medium to their present extent involves the ruin of public and private credit, and will deprive the Government of the means of defending the lives and property of its citizens. If the currency remains in the present expanded state, no measure of relief can be made effectual. Prices must advance, and the means of the Government to pay these prices must daily lose efficiency.

"How to raise the supplies so as not to increase the currency? Organize a loan of one thousand millions, payable in twenty years, interest payable in coin which would require sixty millions; then levy a tax of five per cent. upon the ad valorem value of all the property in the Confederacy, which, deducting that in the hands of the enemy, would amount to three thousand millions, yielding one hundred and fifty millions, less twenty per cent. for losses, evasions, expenses, &c., would leave one hundred and twenty millions, half of this to be paid in specie or the interest coupon of this loan, the other half in Treasury notes. This loan would fund all the currency afloat and leave three hundred millions for supplies.

"By making further additions to the tax," says the Secretary, "the loan can be increased from time to time so as to consolidate the whole public debt; or, as the war continues, to obtain further supplies for carrying it on. By these means the credit of the Government will be firmly established, confidence will be restored, and the embarrassments which now oppress us will be removed."

"The question of raising the required amount of the tax in coin is discussed by Mr. Memminger. He proposes that the interest coupons of the loan shall be equivalent to specie; that half the tax may be paid in these coupons. "He argues that the requirement to pay one-half the tax in coin or in the coupons of the consolidated loan will create in every tax-payer a desire to possess these bonds. Just in proportion to the extent of his property will he have occasion for the bonds, and a universal demand for them will be created by making the tax universal."

The Morris Island correspondent of the New Bedford Mercury writes that the steamer Planter, the vessel which was ran out of Charleston harbor by Robert Smalls, and turned over to the Federal blockading fleet, has been captured by the Confederates. The vessel was bound round to Stono Inlet, but owing to the dense fog prevailing at the time, the pilot ran her past the turn-off in the creek, continuing on too far up the inlet towards Secessionville. He did not discover his error until he ran in among the Confederate picket boats patrolling the vicinity, when she was captured. All except the captain and engineers are contrabands, and some of them formed a part of the crew who ran away with her. It is believed that Smalls was piloting her on the occasion.

The London correspondent of the New York Tribune, in mentioning the fact that the Great Eastern is to be sold for a judgment debt of £5,350, adds: "I am glad of it—I once passed two days on board of her."

**THE BLACK TROOPS.**—The Richmond Enquirer of the 2d instant has an article upon the letter of William Whiting, Solicitor of the U. S. Treasury. The Enquirer says that no case of refusal by the Confederate authorities "to exchange colored soldiers and their white officers upon any terms, whatever" has occurred, "and that no part of the correspondence will show any such refusal."

The Enquirer recites the provisions of a law passed by the Confederate Congress authorizing retaliation for the emancipation proclamation; threatening with death those who incite servile insurrection, and ordering the surrender of all negroes or mulattoes taken in arms against the Confederacy to the authorities of the State where they were captured, and the punishment of their officers by death. The Enquirer says that these last provisions apply in terms to free negroes of the United States; but adds:

"As it is clearly not within the province of one nation to undertake to prescribe the soldiers which another shall use in its armies, we hope that this law will be confined, by additional legislation, to such employment by the enemy of slaves or free negroes of the several States of the Confederacy."

The Enquirer does not think it necessary to argue that the color of a soldier places him beyond the pale of civilized warfare. France, it says, employs negroes, so does Brazil and so does England; and the Confederacy has Indians now in its service, so that it is useless to threaten retaliation because the United States employ the "free negroes of the United States" as soldiers. The Enquirer confesses for its own part a preference to see the Federal armies filled with negroes rather than white men, believing the former to be destitute of all military qualities by nature. And it does not appear to have any objection to the exchange of black troops when prisoners, not thinking the exchange injurious.

But when the Enquirer comes to the question as to the employment of the slaves of the South, it maintains that it is a case for retaliation under the laws of war; and declares that the Confederacy will not abandon the right to return a slave to his master and to punish him for serving the enemy, it adds:

"If the enemy suppose they can prevent its full and complete exercise by refusing to exchange prisoners, they must try the experiment and see what wisdom it will teach them." —[Boston Advocate.]

The Richmond papers say that last Sunday week, a large audience turned out at the Episcopal Church at Orange Court-House, where Rev. Dr. Wilmer, of Albemarle, preached a most able and excellent sermon. Among his auditors were Gens. R. E. Lee, Hill, Fitz Lee, J. E. B. Stuart, and other leading officers of the army, besides many of the privates. Dr. Wilmer frequently visits the army.

The schooner F. W. Johnson of Baltimore, taken by the guard boat Adolph Hugo at Alexandria, on the 1st instant, on the ground that she was violating the U. S. Revenue laws has been released by order of the District Court, the claimants paying the costs. The passengers and crew who were committed to the Old Capitol have also been released.